



Southeast Regional Recycling Partnership (SERRP) Reuse/Recycle/Donate Days *Reuse Event Case Study*



MassDEP Municipal Waste *Reduction* Toolkit

Overview/Introduction: In the last 5 years, the towns of Foxboro, Mansfield, North Attleboro, Plainville and Wrentham formed a regional work group known as the Southeast Regional Recycling Partnership (SERRP). SERRP works to improve the effectiveness of the towns' waste management programs by sharing information on best management practices and improving efficiency of the programs by coordinating activities.

In April 2006 the towns sponsored an Earth Day related event in which residents could clean out their unwanted, but useable, items and donate them to groups that can use them.

The goals of the project were to:

- Educate residents about the numerous opportunities to donate usable items for reuse versus trashing them, to make it easy to participate (local and free),
- Divert items from the waste stream to save money for the towns and residents, and to make residents aware that shredded paper is recyclable (and provide opportunity to do so at no charge).
- This event was also a follow-up to the regional Reuse Guide (designed to increase awareness of local and regional reuse organizations) that was delivered to all households in the SERRP region in January 2006.

Outreach:

- An intern assisted with the creation of flyers to promote the event. The flyers were distributed through the schools about 10-14 days before the event (before school vacation week).
- Posters were displayed in town halls and libraries, and articles were printed in the newspaper resulting from press releases distributed.
- MassDEP sandwich boards were used in several town centers to promote the event.
- Messages were also put on cable stations.

Event Organization:

- The first Reuse/Recycle/Donate day was held on Earth Day, Saturday, April 22, 2006 at the Plainville Commons in a large parking lot.
- 350 cars turned out for the event.
- The event took approximately 5-6 months to plan and execute.
- Locations:

One of the first tasks was to locate a site for the event, with easy highway access for residents of all five towns. No town properties met this requirement so the group had to research private locations that might work and contact property owners to seek support and assess availability of site for event date. It was essential to have sufficient space to support large collection trucks, parking, queuing of cars, display area, mobile paper shredder, and trash rolloffs. A new shopping center, Plainville Commons on Route 1, offered a parking lot in front of a Stop & Shop under construction. Other stores in the plaza were open, and this provided additional promotional opportunities for the event. Since it was private property, Plainville needed to get insurance coverage for the site for the duration of time that the containers would be left there (2-3 days).
- Organizations:

SERRP identified 14 organizations to invite to the event based on the types of items they accept and their willingness/ability to send a truck and staff to the event. Organizations were called and letters were sent to identify site and participation requirements. SERRP would require attendance for the 5-hour event window, truck insurance, and donation receipts for residents. SERRP also secured a mobile paper shredder that donated time and a truck to this event so that free paper shredding was provided. Organizations that participated included:

 - Afrihope,
 - Nikes Not Bombs,

- Building Materials Resource Center,
- Children's Orchard,
- Lions Club,
- Nike,
- North Attleborough Animal Shelter,
- Play It Again Sports,
- Salvation Army, and
- St. Vincent de Paul Society
- Volunteers and donations:

SERRP worked to secure a sufficient quantity of volunteers (~20) to support this effort (muni staff, family members, scout troops, etc.). Donations were garnered from area businesses in the form of: a paper shredder that was raffled off as prize, as well as morning and afternoon refreshments.
- Planning: site layout, permits, insurance, dumpsters

Preparing the site for the event: In planning for traffic flow, SERRP measured the area and clearly defined the entrance, parking areas, traffic flow direction, exit, display area, space for vendors (assigned based on size of truck and to foster best traffic flow). A banner was made and hung on a large fence approaching the shopping plaza. Elections signs were used as the base for a large quantity of signs (printed and attached to election sign) telling drivers where to proceed to event. DEP sandwich boards were used to denote parking areas, as well as entrance and exit. Muni-provided saw horses and traffic cones demarcated boundaries for traffic. A MassDEP grant supported purchase of flyers, canopies (used for sun/rain cover at display area), intern, and banner used to promote event. Trash dumpster service was secured from current municipal vendors, as well as placement of an Abitibi Paper Retriever bin for other paper recycling needs.

Results:

- The number of attendees by Town follows: Foxborough (19), Mansfield (77), North Attleborough (57), Plainville (72), Wrentham (94), Others (21) came from Attleboro, Bellingham, Framingham, Franklin, Medway, Norfolk, Norton, and Walpole. SERRP munis that had more in-school support for flyer distribution appeared to have better turnout at the event.
- There was strong support for this event from residents, it was a great turnout for the first time. Organizations participating included: Afrihope, Nikes Not Bombs, Building Materials Resource Center, Children's Orchard, Lions Club, Nike, North Attleborough Animal Shelter, Play It Again Sports, Salvation Army, and St. Vincent de Paul Society. In addition, Cintas Document Management provided free onsite shredding of personal documents, and Abitibi provided a dumpster for the collection of non-confidential papers for recycling. A home paper shredder donated by Target was raffled off as a way to increase awareness about the recyclability of shredded paper.
- Some of the items collected included:
 - 3,000 lbs. of books
 - 80 bicycles
 - 250 pairs of shoes
 - St. Vincent de Paul left with a full 45 foot truck of goods
 - Salvation Army filled a 30 foot truck with goods
 - Play It Again Sports filled their truck
 - Afrihope partially filled a 45 foot trailer and a 26 foot truck
 - Building Materials Resource Center filled a flatbed truck with good quality items
 - North Attleborough Animal Shelter filled a van, a car, and a pick-up truck
 - Bikes Not Bombs, who collected the bicycles for refurbishing and reuse, said that this was one of the most successful events of this kind that they have ever attended.
 - Cintas Document Management, who provided free paper shredding at the event, collected about 2,500 lbs. of paper for shredding and recycling.

This event proved to be so successful, the group repeated the guide and event in April 2007. Because of the large turnout at the first event, the second was relocated to the Tweeter Center in Mansfield. Results of this second event were pending at the time this was written.